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PASS TO WHA/CAR JOSLYN MACK-WILSON
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TAGS: [BF](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [KHLs](#)
SUBJECT: NASSAU AIRPORT PASSES TSA INSPECTIONS

REF: NASSAU 258

11. (U) SUMMARY: Nassau Airport finally passed Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoint testing following two years of failed security evaluations. Passing the tests eliminated the need for a second security screening checkpoint for U.S.-bound passengers; greatly reducing wait times - a long-standing GCOB objective to improve tourist travel. END SUMMARY

Good News) Shorter Wait Times, More Commercial Space

12. (SBU) Nassau International Airport has finally passed its Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoint testing following two years of multiple failed security evaluations. TSA representatives determined on October 16 that passenger screening at the airport is now comparable to TSA standards. Once the Department of Homeland Security certifies the evaluation, the airport will no longer require two separate security screening checkpoints in the U.S. departures terminal. The redundant checkpoints significantly disrupted passenger flow; forcing U.S.-bound passengers to arrive at the airport three hours in advance of their flights in order to guarantee sufficient time to pass through a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) pre-clearance facility queue, a Bahamian security checkpoint and the TSA-standard checkpoint. The second screening area also limited the amount of commercial space in the terminal.

Need to Watch) Sustaining Security Standards

13. (SBU) TSA told the Nassau Airport Development (NAD), Airport Authority (AA) and Ministry of Tourism and Aviation (MoTA) officials that the key changes for passing inspection included (Ref A) random property screenings, trace-machine searches, elimination of opposite-gender pat-downs and the proper use of handheld metal detectors. Airport Authority management established a long-term training program for screening staff and set up computerized training records. The GCOB also hired an independent Canadian airport security consultant to work with the AA and NAD to oversee the corrective process. When EconOff expressed concerns about long-term sustainability, TSA reported that the GCOB decided to keep the consultant on staff for an additional year. TSA further indicated that they will establish a regional TSA Representative (TSAR) to oversee all pre-clearance operations in the region.

14. (SBU) COMMENT: This has been a major Post success. It is the result of Post's intensive engagement with Bahamian officials through its monthly Airport Security Working Group (ASWG). (U.S. officials worked closely with airport representatives to ensure accountability for action items and

to facilitate communication among the various interested parties.) The presence of a TSAR in Nassau should assist the Nassau Airport to maintain U.S. screening standards. END

COMMENT

AVANT